

February 12, 2016

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a teacher in the ESL (English as a Second Language) program at Middletown Adult Education. The parents and families here range from people who are 'newly arrived' in the United States to refugees to people who have been in our country for a longer period of time! Many are voting citizens, as well. The contributions that my students have made to society include finishing a PhD in International Law, working at Middlesex Hospital with Alzheimer's patients and much more. I have five students in my class that take advantage of the program. This would not be possible without the option of the Even Start program for our parents.

We also have children who have not yet been identified with having special needs. These children, now, have access to early diagnosis, which is so important to their development and growth. Support is essential for the parents, as well.

We offer so many services to our families that they would not receive anywhere else. I am sure that without the Even Start program, our parents would be at a loss; not being able to go to work, take English classes and go to school. I believe that when our State Legislators voted to support these programs, they did the research to find out the necessity of the Even Start program and decided that it was worth funding.

Governor Malloy, please listen to the voices of these parents and children. They would tell you how essential this program is, and how life-changing it has been for each one of them. Keep the funding as it is currently, and assure that your constituents are getting the entitlements that they truly deserve. Support and continue funding the Even Start program. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Jill Friedman, MEd
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